

## The Proportion of Oregon Assisted Suicides by Compassion & Choices Organization

Kenneth Stevens, M.D., March 4, 2009

Officers of the assisted-suicide-proponent organization Compassion in Dying / Compassion & Choices of Oregon are authors of Oregon's physician-assisted suicide law and self-proclaim they are the stewards of the PAS law. They have reported that their organization has "participated in more than three-quarters of the state's cases of doctor-assisted suicide." (The Oregonian, March 10, 2005, "Pharmacy Board with review failed assisted suicide" by Don Colburn)

The extent of their involvement is shown in the following tabulation of the reported numbers of physician-assisted suicide deaths in Oregon for the past eleven years (1998-2008). The Compassion & Choices numbers for the 1998 – 2007 years are from printed information distributed by George Eighmey, Executive Director of Compassion & Choices of Oregon at a public forum in Vancouver, Washington on 9/25/2008. The 53 C&C PAS deaths in 2008 was reported by George Eighmey to The Oregonian reporter Don Colburn. (The Oregonian, March 3, 2009, "60 people died under Oregon law in '08", by Don Colburn) The numbers of PAS deaths for the state for each year are from the published Oregon DHS annual reports regarding Oregon's assisted suicides.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Deaths DHS Reports</u>	<u>C&amp;C Deaths</u>	<u>Non-C&amp;C Deaths</u>	<u>C&amp;C Deaths as a percentage of DHS-Report Deaths</u>
1998	16	11	5	69%
1999	27	18	9	67%
2000	27	21	6	78%
2001	21	17	4	81%
2002	38	31	7	82%
2003	42	34	8	81%
2004	37	29	8	78%
2005	38	25	13	66%
2006	46	31	15	67%
2007	49	32	17	65%
2008	60	53	7	88%
<b>Total 1998-2008</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>75%</b>

The number of C&C PAS deaths as a proportion of DHS-reported deaths was 77% (161/208) for the 1998-2004 years; this confirms the March 2005 statement by C&C that they had participated in over three quarters of doctor-assisted suicides in Oregon. For the 2005-2007 years the C&C proportion of PAS deaths decreased to 66% (88/133).

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In 2008 the proportion of C&C PAS deaths significantly increased to 88% (53/60) of all DHS reported deaths. There is a 66% increase (32 to 53) in the number of C&C PAS from 2007 to 2008. There is a corresponding 59% decrease (17 to 7) in the number of non-C&C PAS deaths from 2007 to 2008.

This is a very significant change. Only 7 of the 60 assisted suicide deaths in Oregon in 2008 were not associated with Compassion & Choices of Oregon. An overwhelming 88% of the reported PAS deaths in Oregon were associated with C&C. It is fitting to conclude with the following selection from an OpEd article in The Oregonian newspaper 9/24/2008:

Assisted suicide: Conspiracy and Control by Kenneth R. Stevens, Jr., M.D. and William L. Toffler, M.D., Guest Opinion, Wednesday September 24, 2008, The Oregonian online at [www.oregonlive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2008/09/assisted\\_suicide\\_conspiracy\\_an.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2008/09/assisted_suicide_conspiracy_an.html)

[T]he group controlling assisted suicide in Oregon is also the group controlling what the public is told. The [Oregonian] editorial board correctly notes "a coterie of insiders run the program, with a handful of doctors and others deciding what the public may know".

The group promoting assisted suicide, so-called "Compassion and Choices (C&C)", are like the fox in the proverbial chicken coop; in this case the fox is reporting its version to the farmer regarding what is happening in the coop. Members of C&C authored and proclaims they are the stewards of Oregon's assisted suicide law. They call it "their law". They have arranged and participated in 3/4ths of Oregon's assisted suicide cases. Their medical director reported she'd participated in more than 100 doctor-assisted suicides as of March 2005. A physician board-member reported in 2006 that he'd been involved with over forty such patients. Their executive director reported in September 2007 that he has attended more than 36 assisted suicide deaths. He has been involved in preparing the lethal solution. Yet, he is not a doctor.

In 2006, C&C's attorneys intimidated the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) to change to euphemisms in referring to Oregon's assisted suicide law. The limited DHS reports of assisted suicides is another indication of this organization's influence. Information that is damaging to the "good public image" of Oregon's assisted suicide law is hidden or glossed-over in the DHS reports. As such, we believe the initials "C&C" of this organization more properly reflect its repeated public behavior ---that is, "Conspiracy & Control".

Regardless of one's perspective on assisted suicide, all citizens should be concerned about the controlling influence of this death-promoting organization. In all other areas of medicine, we are striving for increased transparency---not conspiracy and control.

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